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SOURCE Interreport-Ost, No 235.BREAKDOWN AT THE "REPUBLIKA" POWER STATION IN BULGARIA

At the beginning of January 1953, the "Republika" TETs (Steam-Heat and Electric Power Station) was rendered completely inoperative by a series of mechanical defects. It took 10 days to carry out the necessary repairs and to get the power station to function again. This breakdown resulted in the temporary closing down of a large number of industrial enterprises in the suburbs of Sofia.

About the middle of January, the Secretary of the Steel Workers' Union demanded the punishment of the saboteurs "who were responsible for Sofia workers' being idle for weeks." Following this speech, the assembled workers were packed into waiting trucks and in the middle of the winter night were driven to the "Republika" TETs. As ordered, the workers demonstrated for the rest of the night. About 40 workers and 8 engineers were arrested. Before the month had passed, these men were sentenced to forced labor for periods ranging from 3 to 10 years. The penalties were imposed by a tribunal composed of industrial informers.

Ever since its establishment, the TETs has been a source of trouble to the regime. A number of errors in construction led to endless complaints. As long as Anton Yugov was Minister of Heavy Industry, that is, up to August 1952, no attention could be paid to these complaints because the plans for the construction of the power plant had issued from the office of the former Minister of Industry /Yugov/, who subsequently took over the Ministry of Heavy Industry. Following Yugov's removal /he was made a vice-chairman of the Council of Ministers/, investigations took place and the charges of defective construction were incorporated in the charges against the minister, who has fallen from grace.

Inasmuch as Yugov's fate has not been decided thus far, it is not yet being admitted at the TETs that the collapse of the /power/ network and of the installation have been brought about by fundamental defects in engineering, and by dilletantism. Conditions at the "Republika" TETs grew steadily worse and finally led to the shutdown referred to at the beginning of this report.

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Because similar manifestations have been observed in all newly constructed TETs and VETs (hydroelectric power plants) -- in the Petrokhan VETs three giant turbines had to be deactivated because the supports were too light and in the Kolarov TETs, shortly after the initiation of a coking plant, it was found that the entire battery was defective -- an example had to be set so that all such cases could be traced to sabotage.

The negotiations at the "Republika" TETs were considered to be of strictly local concern and therefore were made known only to the trade union and to the other TETs and VETs, that is, to those power plants which depended upon the "Republika" TETs. It is possible, therefore, that similar arrests and court procedures have also taken place elsewhere in Bulgaria.

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